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Excavations and Surveys in Israel 1985

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had *kokhim* (2.30 long) hewn into three of its walls: three each in the west and east walls and two in the north wall, which also had a rock-hewn repository niche. Three pottery sarcophagi (1.90 × 0.52 m) and a limestone ossuary (0.70 × 0.50 × 0.27 m) with a heavy lid were found in the cave. The sarcophagi were found in a *kokh*, on the shelf around the central pit and in the pit. Four of the *kokhim* were found empty, while the others contained only scanty skeletal remains. The cave was probably plundered in antiquity.

(Communicated by N. Feig)

YIFTAḤ'EL

A limited sounding was carried out in September 1985 in the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B (7th millennium BCE) strata in Area C at Yiftaḥ'el by J. Garfinkel on behalf of the Department of Antiquities, with the financial assistance of the Jerusalem Center for Anthropological Research. The anthropologist Y. Hershkovitz of Tel Aviv University, H. Miller and volunteers took part in the work.

During the excavation, about 30 sq m of the plaster floors uncovered in the two preceding seasons were removed. Two skeletons in contracted position were uncovered, one of a young child and the other of an adult. Parts of a plaster floor belonging to another building were also exposed. An early stratigraphic phase previously insufficiently known came to light under the floors. Thousands of flint implements and large quantities of animal bones and seeds were collected.

(Communicated by J. Garfinkel)

TEL YIN'AM — 1983/1984

The excavations conducted at Tel Yin'am by H. Liebowitz on behalf of the University of Texas at Austin continued during the 1983 and 1984 seasons.

Area B. Two new squares were opened near the remains of the structure adjoining the west wall of the 13th century palace, but no additional building remains were found. North of the palace, the investigation of Building 2 was completed and an additional building (3) was located. Building 2 consists of a "broadroom" courtyard with an earth floor in the north, a small room paved with pebbles on the southwest and a "broadroom" on the southeast. The west side of this room had an earth floor, while the east side had a cobbled pavement (these may have been two separate rooms). The southeast room served as a storeroom and contained fragments of large biconical jugs, store jars and bowls, as well as a unique Mycenean stirrup jar, provisionally dated to LH IIIA2—IIIB.

An oven lined with sherds and a stone-lined flue at the base for the intake of air was uncovered in the courtyard, as well as a work table made from stacked stones topped by a large flat stone. The pottery from the courtyard included bowls, a cooking pot and kraters of local ware and a Mycenean piriform stirrup jar found next to the work table.

Building 3 is located west of Building 2 and at a lower level. The plan of this building has not yet been traced, but the assemblage of sherds found on the flagstone floor of the western room

included restorable large carinated bowls, cooking pots and store jars dated, like the pottery from Building 2, to the 13th century BCE.

Excavation of the new squares opened in 1984 provided evidence for three distinct phases from the Roman—Byzantine period. The underlying Persian stratum yielded the corner of a large building with a cobblestone floor, but the ceramic assemblage was meager. Continued excavation unearthed the first Iron II building remains encountered at Tel Yin'am — a well-laid stone floor with a foundation of gravel and sherds. The builders of this floor reused walls from the final Iron I stratum. The excavations reached the cobbled surface of a late Iron I building, which had been partially excavated in 1979. Forty loom weights and fragments of store jars, an unusual krater and a rare red slipped chalice with a bar handle were found in this area (Square M 13). A large perforated stone, which is probably a weight used in the nearby olive press was also found (Square M 12).

North of this building, excavations were begun of a well-preserved building which underwent several building phases and which is dated to the late 11th or early 10th century BCE.

(Communicated by H. Liebowitz)

KHIRBET ZIKHRIN — 1984/1985

Excavations were carried out at Kh. Zikhrin in June-October 1984 and July-August 1985 on behalf of the Department of Classical Studies of Tel Aviv University and the Archaeological Survey of Israel. The project is supported by the "Pioneer" Concrete Company. The work was directed by M. Fischer, assisted by Daphna Steiner (assistant and registrar, 1984), S. Giveon and E. Franko (area supervisor, 1984), M. Nadav (area supervisor, 1985), Henrietta El'azar and Ronit Dagan (registrars, 1985), I. Segal and his team (surveyors, 1984/1985) and volunteers. A. Kindler of the "Haaretz" Museum was numismatic advisor. A survey of the cisterns was carried out by Z. Zuck and volunteers from the Yarkon Field School.

The excavations focused on Area F (1984/1985) and Area G (1984).

The Church. The typical basilical building (28.0 × 15.0 m), which is orientated east—west, was completely exposed. It consists of an atrium (15.3 × 5.0 m), a narthex (15.3 × 5.0 m) and the basilica itself (18.0 × 15.3 m). The narthex could be entered from outside both from the north and from the south, while there was only one entrance into the atrium from the narthex. At a later stage, a row of rooms was added on the north. A cistern covered with stone slabs was located in the atrium, which was paved with a plain mosaic. At a later stage, the atrium was divided into two by a wall with a doorway. The narthex was paved with geometrically patterned mosaics and a fragment of a Greek inscription mentioning the title "presbyter" was set into the south part of the floor, opposite the doorway.

At the east end of the nave, the *diakonikon* and the *prothesis* were uncovered on either side of the apse. A cruciform structure in the center of the *prothesis* may be the foundation of a baptismal basin. Fragments of mosaic floors were discovered in almost all excavated parts of the church. The mosaic floor in the north aisle consisted of a carpet of white squares framed by three rows of colored tesserae. A Greek inscription was set into the east end of the floor, consisting of an appeal for help to Christ. Another fragment of inscription was uncovered east of the above mentioned one. The mosaic along the stylobate of the nave is composed of two rows of gradually indented, colored rhomboids on a white background.

The southern walls of the church were founded directly on the rock, while the northern walls rested on a fill. The outer faces of the walls were built of large, neatly fitted ashlars. The inner face had been covered with painted plaster, on the evidence of colored plaster fragments found in the debris. Three column bases of the northern stylobate were found *in situ*; originally, the stylobate had carried five columns. The base of a pier was uncovered at the west end of the northern stylobate. A marble fragment bearing a cross found in Area A was originally part of a chancel screen and a small marble Corinthian capital seems to belong to the same complex.

Pottery and coins found under the floors date the construction of the church to the 4th century CE. Repairs of the walls and mosaic floors show that the building existed for a long time. In the Mameluke period, the church was turned into a dwelling with rows of small rooms and many ovens.

Residential Complex. A path about 2.0 m wide separates the southern wall of the church from a large residential area covering about 400 sq m and consisting of three components: a large building (15.0 × 15.0 m), a central building (12.0 × 7.0 m) abutting its east wall, and storerooms adjoining the northeast corner of the complex. The masonry of the complex is similar to that of the church. The pottery, glass and stone objects, the animal bones, the bronze utensils and the coins reflect everyday life in the 6th century CE.

The Bathhouse, in the southeast corner of Area F, measured 15.0 × 10.0 m and comprised a furnace, a hot room (*caldarium*), a warm room (*tepidarium*, 8.0 × 4.0 m), part of which is a direct continuation of the hot room and the other part is paved with mosaics, and a cold room (*frigidarium*) of the same shape as the *tepidarium* and with a mosaic floor. A plastered bathtub (1.0 × 1.0 m, depth about 0.6 m) was in a corner of the cold room.

The remains of a large building were uncovered north of the bathhouse. Its proximity to the bathhouse and the parallel alignment of its walls indicate that it had some function in operating the baths. The part nearest the baths included a large cistern and a plastered drain.

Residential and Industrial Area, in the southwest part of Area F. Here a large building was uncovered, with two large crushing basins in one of its courtyards. In another courtyard, which served as an oil press, part of a Roman sarcophagus decorated with garlands was found reused in one of the walls. Remains of other industrial installations, a white mosaic floor and apparatus connected with the oil industry were also found. The houses, the building methods, the architectural details and the small finds indicate that this industrial complex flourished in the 6th—7th centuries CE. This area is connected with the industrial area in Area B and both represent the outskirts of the settlement.

Area G. Here a stepped rock-cut pool and a winepress were uncovered. The treading surface (7.0 × 7.0 m) in the center of the winepress is paved with mosaics, and on it was a pressing installation consisting of a stone basin with a stone beam (2.0 × 0.5 m). To the north was another mosaic surface with two pools: a small square pool (1.2 × 1.2 m, depth 0.7 m) with plastered walls and a mosaic floor, where the wine was collected before it was drained into a large round pool (diam. 3 m, depth 1.5 m), again with plastered walls, a mosaic floor and a pit for sediments in the center. Two small plastered vaulted chambers (2.2 × 1.2 m) were uncovered on the south side of the building. Drainage channels connected these chambers to the treading surface. Two additional rooms (4.0 × 2.5 m) on the east side of the complex each contain a round pit (diam. 0.8 m, depth 0.5 m).

The Cemetery. The site is surrounded on at least three sides by tombs. In the southern burial area, seven concentrations of graves were recorded, each containing about fifteen burials in the earth, as well as two burial caves with *kokhim*. A small mausoleum, probably connected with one of the estates in the vicinity, was discovered northwest of the site. The mausoleum, which contains three *arcosolia* tombs, is surrounded by a massive wall. All the tombs which were investigated had been plundered and their date cannot be established.

A piece of an uninscribed milestone was found in secondary use in the southwest corner of the site. The stone has a square base and only the lower part of the cylindrical shaft has been preserved. This milestone probably stood on the Roman road leading from Caesarea via Antipatris and Gophna to Jerusalem, which passed fairly near the site.

(Communicated by M. Fischer)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Banias, Nature Reserve

Together with the declaration of Banias as a Nature Reserve the Department of Antiquities set up a team which will be responsible for the archaeological development of the site. The team consists of V. Tsaferis and Z. Ma'oz (Dept. of Antiquities), E. Netzer (Hebrew University) and Y. Meshorer (Israel Museum). The excavation project will be directed by V. Tsaferis (see report on the excavations at Banias p. 7).

Khirbet Duheishe

A salvage excavation was carried out in November 1984 on behalf of the Department of Antiquities by Y. Porath and S. Pipano at Kh. Duheishe, situated on a hill southeast of Moshav Ge'alya (map ref. 1283/1436). Irit Poleg, I. Bruce and I. Shafrir assisted in the work. Three graves dug into the *ḥamra* soil were uncovered on top of the hill. Next to them store jars and bowls containing animal bones (sheep/goats) were found. The pottery in the graves included fragments of store jars, a carinated bowl and fragments of shallow bowls as well as complete store jars of Middle Bronze II containing dipper juglets.

Large store jars of light colored clay, delicately ribbed and with round handles on the shoulder, were uncovered at the northern edge of the site. They should probably be dated to the Middle Ages. Crumbling skeletal remains, laid in a north—south direction, were visible in the section next to the jars.

(Communicated by S. Pipano)

'En Avi'el

In June 1984, two channels belonging to an irrigation system near 'En Avi'el, in the region of the upper Naḥal Taninim (map ref. 1501/2169), were cleared by A. Siegelmann, Inspector of Antiquities. Young people and volunteers from the vicinity worked on the project. The channels were hewn into the rock in order to penetrate into water-bearing layers and increase the flow of water. The date of the system could not be ascertained.

(Communicated by A. Siegelmann)